

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

With Observations on TRANSACTIONS at Home.

Saturday. June 16. 1705.

FROM what has been Observ'd in our own Affairs, let us look into the present War, and see what Lectures of Peace are Preach'd to us from thence. Our Armies of *Protestant* Heroes, are Facing their Enemies, and Flush'd with Victories, we pleas'd our selves with the Daily Expectation of a Battle, I mean on the Moselle; for we are now where else in a Posture to Desire it.

Now I beg leave to look on the Dark side of this Affair, not that I would Discourage any from hopes upon the Issue of Affairs Abroad, if Fidelity and Conduct continue to appear in *English* Management, which they have but very lately begun to do.

But in order to show us the Necessity of Peace at Home, it is equally useful to show our People what is before them; if (*as who shall answer for the Events of a War?*) things should not go so well Abroad, as we Expect them.

In an Alarm we had a few Days ago of a Mail from *Holland*, and an Express from the Duke of *Marlborough*, some Body (*for what Ends I know not*) reported; That General had Forc'd the *French* Lines, and Beaten *Mareschal Villars*.

I should be glad to find this prove a *Prophetick* Rumour, as the like Rumour did, when we had it last Year reported in *London*, That the Duke of *Marlborough* had met the *French* Army, Beaten them in a Great Battle, and taken the *Mareschal Tallard* Prisoner, above a Fortnight before the Battle was really fought.

But I observ'd in the Report of this, the People run-away so Eagerly with it, that when they found the Disappointment, they were even loth to believe it was not so.

Messengers run hourly to see, if the Standard was out at the Tower, and upon every Noise, *Hark* (says one) *the Guns at the Tower go off*.

Nor was this all, but we were as hasty in forming Ideas of Victory in our Minds— And most of us had carry'd the Duke of *Marlborough* to the Walls of *Paris* in a Trice.

Some a little more Grave, had brought the King of *France* a little to himself again, after the first Surprise; and these represented him sending Expresses to the Duke de *Villeroy* immediately to abandon *Flanders*, and march with the whole *French* Army to the Frontiers of

of *Champagne*, and to Defend the Banks of the *Marn* and *Seyne*; others to the Duke de *Vendosm* in *Italy*, to make large Detachments to the *Upper Rhine*—And, in short, all Agreed the War was finish'd, that now the *French* would give you *Carte blanc*, and Sign to the Peace of *Europe* upon your own Terms.

These are fine things, Gentlemen, and very pretty to Talk of, and no Man would more rejoice in the reality of them, than I.

But *France* is not so soon Conquer'd, the *Mareschal Fillars* shows himself as Politick, as he is known to be a Daring General—To say the *French* are afraid to Fight, is perhaps saying true, while they are Inferiour in Force—But why are they Inferiour in Force?—The Reason is plain, *That they may be superiour to you in another place*; if they were stronger than you by 20000 Men, yet it would not be their Business to Fight you there; but as 80000 Men is sufficient to keep you *at Bay*, Entrenching and Fortifying in your Sight, their refusing to Fight, if you cannot force them to it, is a Victory; and by this they show you too plainly, that they will not be easily beaten.

We are told by the last Advices from *Amsterdam*, That the *Dutch* have appointed a General Fast and Humiliation, upon the present Doubtful Conjunction of Affairs.

I would have no Body Infer from hence, That the *Dutch* are Discourag'd and Apprehensive of their Affairs, but I would have all Men Infer from hence, That the Enemy is not yet Reduc'd: The Prodigious Power of *France*, is in nothing more Visible, than in this, the Extraordinary Posture of their Affairs, after so terrible a Blow as that at *Blenheim*, a Battle, take it in all its Consequences, which no Prince in the World but him, could have born to lose; whether you Consider the Number of Men lost, or their Character, as the Flower of his Troops, and especially of Horse.

I have heard it Computed, That from the first March of Monsieur *Tallard* from *Strasburgh*, to the taking of *Landau*, the *French* including the *Bavarians* that were after Broke and Disbanded, or submitted to the Emperor, actually lost 80000 Men.

If after such a Loss, this Prince is able to Mate you still, where you are strongest, appears *Euse*; and in all other Places pushes on

an Offensive War, Besieging Towns, and Reducing Provinces; Are there not Motives enough in such a Case, to Guide us to Consider, and to reflect what a Consequence would still be, if this Politick Prince should be suffered to give one turn more to his Affairs in the World.

If any single aim in all this, was not to show the Necessity of Peace at Home, and Union both in Council and Affection among our selves, I could no way approve of my suggesting these Possibilities, but as I am very sure the Consequences are just, and the Prospect rational, I am forward to say something on this Head, to bring us to judge rightly of our own Affairs, and not to think all the War over too soon.

I confess, the Gentlemen who push on our Disorders at Home, and who are Driving at Parties and Oppressions here, seem to me to act as if there was really no such thing as a War Abroad.

And this makes their proceeding the more Mysterious, since we all know, they are not the most Vigorous of all the Race of *English* Men, to have the *French* Beaten.

To fall out at Home, fall upon any Party at Home, at least that have any Strength or Interest, so as to make it a Division, should signify that we have no Enemies Abroad, or none that we Value; that the *French* are Beaten, and that we have nothing to fear from them, or else, that we are all beside our selves.

I wish the first of these was true, we should then have so much the less to fear from our Enemies at Home; the Strife would not be so fatal, the Experiment not so Dangerous, and the Character of the Men, would not so much sink in the Eyes of those that wish well to the Prosperity of this Nation.

But to fall out when we are Embark'd in a Terrible War, when Engag'd with such Confederates, as if we Discourage them by our Conduct; and they finding us not to be Depended upon, should abandon us, we must be Devoured and Undone; this is one of the greatest Inconsistencies, and Unaccountable Pieces of Folly, that ever any Nation was Guilty of.

I may, perhaps, take some Liberty to Enforce this Argument, and be a little large upon it hereafter; I am, not of the Opinion

nion, that any of the Allies have yet Thoughts of Abandoning the Confederacy ; but this I must say, The Confederacy is like a Chain of Links, whose whole Strength consists in their hanging to one another, and in pulling every one their share of the Draught ; if one Link falls off, a great many more go off with it, and the Chain is shorten'd immediately.

The Strength of the Confederacy consists in the Union of its Members ; and I will not say, but many of them would fall off from you, if the General Union were once broken.

It was not a little Management, Conduct, and Forecast, that brought this Confederacy to such a Head ; the late Glorious King William, laid many a Scheme in Vain, and Variety of Measures His Majesty Concerted to bring it to pass ; and *tho' some People do not love to bear it, 'tis plain, he was the Author, the Life and Soul of this Confederacy.*

If any Body thinks it was lightly, or superficially Compos'd, the Error must be in his Judgment ; and if I should run over the Politicks of the Management of Princes, *how on both Sides ;* now this Prince, now that ; some by Stratagem, some by Force, were brought over from Party to Party, the History must be very Entertaining.

The Conduct cannot be small, that brought over the Duke of Savoy from the Confederates, in the last War ; nor has it been less to restore that Prince to his Friends, and to keep him Tight and Hearty in their Interest *now, tho' to the Ruine of his whole Dominions, and Dispossessing him of Italy.*

What Policies Govern'd the Electors of Cologne and Liege, in favour of the House of Bavaria ? And what brought the same House of Bavaria over, to turn their Hands against their Benefactors ?

The Wits of the Governments, were nicely Employ'd on all Sides, as well as their Arms, and the utmost Policy form'd this Confederacy —

The bringing into it the Princes of *Wolfsbuttel*, the Bishop of *Munster*, the King of *Poland*, and the King of *Portugal* ; how have they Employed, and sometimes Embarrass'd all the Councils of this part of *Europe* ? And how much Easier is it to Separate, than to Joyn ? How much Easier to

Dissolve, than to Unite Nations of separate Interests in one Agreement ?

Let those Gentlemen then Determine for me and themselves, if by any Dangerous Experiment, any *Party-Project*, we had fallen into such Confusions at Home, as should have shaken the General Union Abroad ; What had become, *at least, of us in England* ? And how justly would the Blame of Destroying the Confederacy Abroad, have been laid at our Door ?


Had then the more Unsettled Members of the Confederates, made their Peace Gradually with the *French*, till at last every other Member should have been prompted to look to themselves, and to set up apart, what should we be to the *French Power* ? Would our Wooden Walls protect us ? Would our Manufactures force their way ? What would our Ignorant Observing *people say* ?

For shame, Gentlemen, let us observe the Connection of Things ; if we do not preserve Peace at Home, we can never act so, as to be depended upon from Abroad ; the End of which must be our Confederates must Abandon us, and shift for themselves ; and the End of that will be, that we shall be Undone, so that in our Peace, consists our Safety.

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